UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

University of Toronto Wind Symphony

Pratik Gandhi, *conductor*

Wednesday, December 4, 2024 at 7:30 pm
Tribute Communities Recital Hall, 83 York Blvd., Toronto

"BIG CITY LIGHTS" – CONCERT PROGRAM

Metroplex: Three Postcards from Manhattan

Robert Sheldon (b. 1954)

City Knights

Kelijah Dunton (b. 1999)

Concerto Grosso for Sax Quartet and Band

William Bolcom (b. 1938)

I. Lively
II. Song Without Words
III. Valse
IV. Badinerie

featuring The Nameless Quartet
Kannan Bloor, Min Gu Kang, Blake Smith, Yunfei Xie, *saxophone*

presented under license from Keiser Southern Music,
on behalf of Edward B. Marks and Bolcom Music

INTERMISSION

Adrenaline City

Adam Gorb (b. 1958)

City Rain

Judith Lang Zaimont (b. 1945)

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

As part of the Faculty's commitment to improving Indigenous inclusion, we call upon all members of our community to start/continue their personal journeys towards understanding and acknowledging Indigenous peoples' histories, truths and cultures. Visit indigenous.utoronto.ca to learn more.

Across the Halfpipe

Samuel R. Hazo (b. 1966)

Big City Lights

Marie A. Douglas (b. 1987)

Midnight on Main Street

Brian Balmages (b. 1975)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO WIND SYMPHONY
Pratik Gandhi, *conductor*

Flute
Ethan Allaire
Sophia Guo
Isabella Ignacio
Naomi Anne Lobo
Kathleen Murphy
Elaine Wang
Lily Zheng
Ivy Bumanglag §
Lauren Radeschi §

Piccolo
Isabella Ignacio
Elaine Wang
Josh Chong §
Lisa Han §

Oboe
Iulia Jauca
Yeonji Oh §†
Clara Aristanto §
Christopher Vishy §

Bassoon
Rachel Chen
Kira Greenlees
Kendal Morrison §
Grace Qiu §

Contrabassoon
Rachel Chen

Clarinet
Crystal Chong
Felicity Quadrini
Sophia Stellato *
Tom Tsang
Emmanuel Wong
Cheng Cheng §†
Emerald Sun †
Jessica Tse †
Eliza Abbott §
Marco Ding §
Benjamin Gillingham-Murray §
Dario Hila §

Bass Clarinet
Angela Lin

Contra Alto Clarinet
Erik Kamstra †

Alto Saxophone
Emmalin Pan
Lovepreet Swaich
Chun Wang
Aidan Wong

Tenor Saxophone
Nicole Carson
Dylan Windsor

Baritone Saxophone
Hei Nam Yeung

Trumpet
Rachel Aziz
Divya Dhoum
Youngdo Kim
Teresa Osko
Sunny Park
Tony Ruan
Charlie Steggles
Robyn Tamburro
Kevin Hayward §
Naomi Hunter §
Jayang Kim §

Horn
Leander Delos Santos
Grace Song
Jessica Lin †
Paolo Rosselli †
Ilinca Stafie †
Nathan Bergman §
Ethan Chialtas §
Ewen Hutton §

Trombone
Aryn Davies
Shaela Lundy
Nathan Smitiuch
Zaynab Tahir *
Abellia Chan §
Kenzie Ford §

Bass Trombone
Rebecca Plante
Ian Tong §

Euphonium
Cassandra Sydoruk
Jonathan Wang
Lionel Stanway §

Tuba
Harrison Greenaway
Timmy Wang
Brooklynn Williams
Elizabeth Fair §
Jack Shiels §

Harp
Lexi Hunter-Assing

Piano
Elaine Wang

Percussion
Alex Bhadra
Jon Bilek
Luca Jovanov
Matthew Medina
Amiel Ang †
Randall Chaves Camacho †
Yi-Hsuan Lo †
Reuben Faigao §
Jerry Yuan §
Yue Yin Zhang §
Jeffrey Zhu §

* *ensemble managers*
† *guest musicians*
§ *Wind Ensemble*

PROGRAM NOTES

Metroplex: Three Postcards from Manhattan

Tonight's concert begins with a flashy portrait of the Manhattan cityscape. The majesty and dizzying heights of New York's skyscrapers give way to the hazy atmosphere of its night life, as we spend some time in a jazz club. Then, suddenly, we're in one of the famous yellow taxi cabs, speeding through the busy streets of Manhattan. Finally, we look out the window back at the skyline, seeing it from afar in all its splendour.

City Knights

New York City is also home to Kelijah Dunton, who composed this next piece on our program. Dunton, a native of Brooklyn, is one of eight founding members of the Nu Black Vanguard composers collective (one of the other founders is Marie A. Douglas, whose music we're also playing tonight). *City Knights* blends classical techniques and the wind band instrumentation with modern hip-hop rhythms and gestures. Composed in 2018, it was the winner of the Shoreview Northern Lights Variety Band composition contest the following year.

Concerto Grosso for Saxophone Quartet and Band

The legendary American composer William Bolcom originally wrote this work for sax quartet and orchestra in 2000, on a commission from the Prism Quartet; he later adapted it for band in 2009. Bolcom's conception represents modern takes on earlier ideas, from the notion of a featured quartet working as a unit (Bolcom likens them to the Beatles) to the formal design. The first movement, "Lively", functions as a prelude or intrada, while the "Song Without Words" hearkens back to Mendelssohn as well as folk ballads. The final two movements borrow from French forms but Bolcom pairs each with contrasting material: the "Valse" also includes a mercurial scherzo section, and the "Badinerie" is set against R&B interludes. Bolcom's characteristic angular lyricism and jazz-inflected harmonic language pervade the entire work. Our featured guests, the Nameless Quartet, received an honourable mention in the 2024 Winds Concerto Competition.

Adrenaline City

For this work, written in 2006, Adam Gorb was "inspired by both the stress and vibrancy of 21st century life." Gorb challenges the musicians with syncopations, polyrhythms, and asymmetrical metres, as well as plenty of exposed, chamber-like settings. A driving main idea is contrasted with more lyrical material featuring the saxophones, and episodes with percussion-led grooves. *Adrenaline City* was commissioned by a group of military bands led by the USAF Academy Band, and in 2008 it won the British Composer Award for best work for wind band or brass band.

City Rain

Judith Lang Zaimont is a respected American composer and educator who has been a vocal advocate for female composers, especially the inclusion of their music in pedagogical materials. Her own music is characterized by dense textures and complex rhythmic interplay. *City Rain* was commissioned by the American Composers Forum and is cast as a miniature tone poem depicting a summer rain shower on a city street. A unifying motive based on the words in the title is combined with gentle body percussion to open the piece, while the middle section features big unison writing and "musical lightning".

Across the Halfpipe
The third movement of a suite called *Minnesota Portraits*, “Across the Halfpipe” was originally written about snowboarding, but the image of aerial tricks and stunts on a halfpipe translates just as well to skateboarding, a distinctly urban pastime. Samuel Hazo uses upbeat grooves, woodwind flourishes, and colourful harmonies to depict the thrill of the sport.

Big City Lights
In this piece, composer Marie A. Douglas aims to give audiences a flavour of her hometown of Atlanta. She takes inspiration from the hip-hop subgenre of trap music, which was pioneered in Atlanta around the turn of the century. Douglas writes for the band as if she were a DJ, imitating various effects, filters, and distortion, as well as the Roland TR-808 (a drum machine), and other synthesized sounds. Markings in the music evocative of trap styles and lingo include “It’s Lit!”, “Issa Vibe”, and “Chopped and Screwed”.

Midnight on Main Street
Brian Balmages conceived this work as the soundtrack to a fictional fireworks show. Sudden interjections and meter changes characterize the first section of the piece, which gives way to a shimmering, kaleidoscopic middle section with numerous solos. A heavy rock beat drives the third section before a John Adams-inspired, minimalist coda provides a brilliant ending.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Pratik Gandhi (he/him) is an award-winning freelance conductor and researcher based in Toronto. He is a sessional lecturer at the University of Toronto Faculty of Music, where he directs the Wind Symphony. He is also music director of the Rouge River Winds and the Milton Philharmonic Orchestra, and was the founding music director of Soup Can Theatre. In addition to regularly guest conducting and adjudicating bands and orchestras, Pratik is active in several organizations that support music educators, most notably the Ontario Band Association. Since 2017, he has also served as Vice-Chair of the Concert Band Division of MusicFest Canada. Pratik is currently a doctoral student at York University, where his research, supported in part by an Ontario Graduate Scholarship, investigates issues of equity and representation among wind band composers in Canada. Pratik received a B.Mus. in music education and an M.Mus. in conducting from the University of Western Ontario, where he studied conducting with Colleen Richardson, Jerome Summers, and James McKay, and percussion with Jill Ball.

The Nameless Quartet was formed in 2022 and is composed of saxophonists Yunfei Xie (soprano), Blake Smith (alto), Kannan Bloor (tenor), and Min Gu Kang (baritone). The group specializes in classical works and often transcribes string quartets to explore beyond the standard saxophone repertoire. Additionally, the Nameless Quartet shows versatility in jazz and pop styles, which they perform at outreach concerts at local high schools, as part of the University of Toronto’s Music Oasis Concert Series, and at the Faculty of Music Undergraduate Association’s Benefit Concert. Most notably, the Nameless Quartet was named Honourable Mention at the 2024 University of Toronto Winds Concerto Competition, and will be performing William Bolcom’s Concerto Grosso in December 2024 under the baton of Pratik Gandhi. The group is coached by Dr. Wallace Halladay as part of the University’s chamber music program. Each member of the quartet has a diverse background in chamber music and international experience which allows for an ongoing exchange of progressive musical ideas.